

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. In addition, please insert the following terminology as required by MPEP §608.01(m).

The invention claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A physical barrier for sealing an orifice in a panel member, comprising:

a plastic carrier having a peripheral edge, a deck portion surrounded by a circumferential lip; and
a patch adapted to adhere to said plastic carrier and the panel member; and
wherein said patch encapsulates is attached to at least a portion of said plastic carrier said deck portion and a bottom surface of said circumferential lip and encapsulates said peripheral edge;
wherein a center portion of said patch is supported by said deck portion of said plastic carrier.

2. (Original) The physical barrier of claim 1, wherein said patch is configured to seal an interface between said plastic carrier and the orifice upon being heat-activated.
3. (Original) The physical barrier of claim 2, wherein a portion of said patch is disposed between said plastic carrier and the panel member to seal the plastic carrier and the orifice upon being heat-activated.

4. (Original) The physical barrier of claim 1, wherein said carrier is adapted to be attached to said panel member.

5. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 4, further comprising one or more snap-fit fasteners mounted on said carrier and adapted to attach said carrier to said panel member.

6. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 5, wherein said snap-fit fasteners include a protrusion defining said peripheral edge of said plastic carrier and having a bottom surface, said patch is wrapped around said protrusion to encapsulate said peripheral edge and is attached to said bottom surface.

7. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 5, wherein said snap-fit fasteners include a lip defining said peripheral edge of said plastic carrier and having a bottom surface, said patch is wrapped around said lip to encapsulate said peripheral edge and is attached to said bottom surface.

8. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 5, wherein said fasteners are a plurality of S-shaped clips.

9. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 8, wherein said S-shaped clips include a tail defining said peripheral edge of said plastic carrier and having a bottom surface, said patch is wrapped around said tail to encapsulate said peripheral edge and is attached to said bottom surface.

10. (Original) The physical barrier of claim 1, wherein said patch comprises 10-40 wt % ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA), 5-35 wt % styrene butadiene rubber (SBR), 5-22 wt % talc, 10-45 wt % mica, and 10-30 wt % tall oil rosin.
11. (Withdrawn) The physical barrier of claim 8, wherein said patch comprises 29 wt % EVA, 16 wt % SBR, 12 wt % talc, 26 wt % mica, and 17 wt % tall oil rosin.
12. (Withdrawn) A method of sealing an orifice in a panel member, comprising:
 - joining a patch made of a heat-activated material to a portion of a plastic carrier such that the patch encapsulates a peripheral edge of the plastic carrier;
 - attaching the plastic carrier to the panel member; and
 - adhering the plastic carrier to the panel member with a portion of the patch disposed between the plastic carrier and the panel member.
13. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 12, wherein the heat-activated material of the patch comprises 10-40 wt % ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) and 5-35 wt % styrene butadiene rubber (SBR), with the balance comprising fillers of talc, mica and tall oil rosin.
14. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 13, wherein the heat-activated material of the patch comprises fillers of 5-22 wt % talc, 10-45 wt % mica, and 10-30 wt % tall oil rosin.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 13, wherein the heat-activated material of the patch comprises 29 wt % EVA, 16 wt % SBR, 12 wt % talc, 26 wt % mica, and 17 wt % tall oil rosin.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 12, wherein the heat-activated material of the patch comprises 10-40 wt % ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA), 5-35 wt % styrene butadiene rubber (SBR), 5-22 wt % talc, 10-45 wt % mica, and 10-30 wt % tall oil rosin.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 12, wherein joining the patch to the plastic carrier includes vacuum-forming the patch to the plastic carrier to encapsulate the peripheral edge of the carrier.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 12, wherein adhering the plastic carrier to the panel member includes heating the patch such that the heat-activated material of the patch generally flows.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 18, wherein heating the patch includes heating at a temperature of about 175° Fahrenheit to about 400° Fahrenheit.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of sealing an orifice of claim 18, further including the step of curing the heat-activated material of the patch to form a seal between the interface of the plastic carrier and the panel member such that a portion of the patch is disposed between the plastic carrier and the panel member.

21. (New) The physical barrier of claim 1, wherein said deck portion of said carrier substantially covers the orifice in the panel.

22. (New) The physical barrier of claim 1, wherein said patch covers said deck portion of said carrier.

23. (New) A physical barrier for sealing an orifice in a panel, comprising:
a carrier having a first portion inserted into an orifice and a second portion remaining above said orifice, said carrier includes a deck portion surrounded by a lip that extends from an outer surface of said second portion of said carrier; and
a patch configured to cover said second portion of said carrier including an outer edge and a bottom surface of said lip;
wherein said deck portion of said carrier covers the orifice and provides support for a center portion of said patch.

24. (New) The physical barrier of claim 23, wherein said patch is configured to adhere to the panel, and seal an interface between said lip of said carrier and the panel upon being heat-activated.

25. (New) The physical barrier of claim 23, wherein at least a portion of said patch is disposed between said carrier and the panel to seal the carrier and the orifice upon being heat-activated.

26. (New) The physical barrier of claim 23, wherein said patch comprises 10-40 wt % ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA), 5-35 wt % styrene butadiene rubber (SBR), 5-22 wt % talc, 10-45 wt % mica, and 10-30 wt % tall oil rosin.